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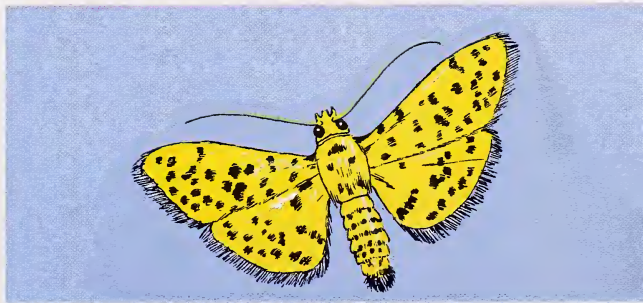
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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

# the YELLOW PEACH MOTH



# The Yellow Peach Moth

*The yellow peach moth<sup>1</sup> is not known to occur in the United States. It may get in. If it does, and if it becomes established, the yellow peach moth may cause serious damage to many crops. Resulting financial losses could be heavy. Watch for this insect and for any other insects you do not recognize. Report them promptly so they may be identified, controlled, and possibly eradicated.*

The yellow peach moth is a general feeder on foliage and fruits of many plants, though typically a pod borer. Among hosts are fruits (including citrus), castor bean, soybean, corn, sorghum, cotton, chestnut, pine, and teak.

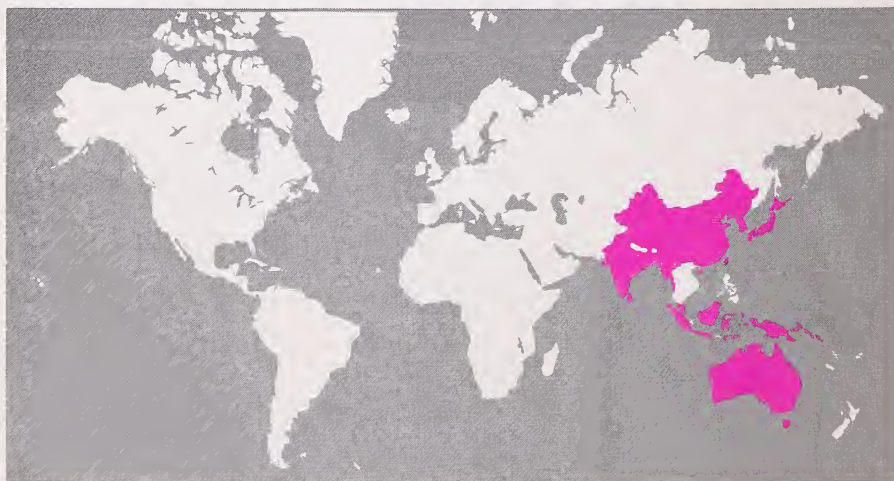
The impact the yellow peach moth might have on the economy of our agriculture, should the pest become established here, is indicated by the

value of some of its preferred host crops. The values below are for crops produced in the United States in 1963.

<i>Crop</i>	<i>Value</i> (millions of dollars)
Corn	4,463
Grain sorghum	568
Soybeans	1,845
Cotton	2,776
Peaches	139
Citrus fruits	518

<sup>1</sup> *Dichocrocis punctiferalis* Guen. Also called the spotted maize moth in Australia and the castor seed caterpillar in India.

The yellow peach moth is one of the most destructive pests of peaches



*Geographic distribution. Red areas indicate parts of the world where the yellow peach moth occurs.*



*Damage to castor bean caused by the yellow peach moth.*

on mainland China and cotton in Australia. Boll infestations of 27 percent are reported from Australia. Corn, grain sorghum, peaches, bananas, papaya, and other fruits are damaged also in Australia. Larval feeding on heads of grain sorghum is sometimes responsible for almost complete loss of crop in coastal areas of the country.

In southern India and Ceylon, the yellow peach moth is a serious pest of castor bean and fruit.

## DESCRIPTION OF INSECT

The adult yellow peach moth has yellow wings that have many black spots. Wing expanse is about 1 inch. The female lays small, oval eggs on or near fruit or seeds of the host plants. Full-grown larvae are  $\frac{3}{5}$  to 1 inch long. They are rather stout, pale or reddish brown, and have numerous flattened horny warts from which arise short bristly hairs. The pupa is brown and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch long. It is enclosed in a white silken cocoon.

## DESCRIPTION OF DAMAGE

Larvae of the yellow peach moth bore into and tunnel the stems and fruits of many plants such as peaches, corn, and cotton. Damage may be noted first on young shoots or seed-pods near where the eggs were laid. On corn, the larvae feed on silk, grain, and cob and sometimes bore into the stalk. In severe attacks on sorghum, plant heads touching each other are bound together in a tight mass of webbing.



*Larva and male adult of the yellow peach moth. Enlarged.*



## THE PLANT PEST PROBLEM

At least half of our most destructive insects entered the United States from other countries, many before the Plant Quarantine Act of 1912 was passed. Today, thousands of plant pests are intercepted at our borders by plant quarantine inspectors, but some gain entry.

When a new pest is detected, organized efforts are exerted to (1) pinpoint the areas where it has become established, (2) set up a quarantine to prevent spread, and (3) control the pest and eradicate it if possible. The sooner a new pest is detected, the better is the chance of controlling or eradicating it before it does serious damage.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Watch for this pest in fruit orchards, grain sorghum, corn, and cotton.

If you find moths or larvae that resemble those described here, or that you do not recognize, send specimens to your nearest agricultural official. The dead moths should be loosely wrapped in soft paper, placed in a small box, and mailed. Mail the larvae in a small bottle containing rubbing alcohol. Include a note giving your name and address, date of collection, and locality where the specimens were found and on what plant. Do not send live specimens. If your local agricultural official does not recognize the specimens, he will send them to the proper authorities for identification.



*Prepared by*  
Plant Pest Control Division  
Agricultural Research Service

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